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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the Pre Technical Learning Lab at the Utah Technical College at Provo which is aimed at providing individualized instruction and tutoring to meet the varied needs of the students. The contents include: "Assessment of Student Needs," which discusses pupil teacher conferences, initial reading assessment, reading tests used for assessment, use of the test results, and instructional activities; "Hourly Schedule for Student Class Work," which reviews appropriation of instructional time, grouping criteria, assignments and learning tasks, student teacher conferences, reading activities, student evaluation of the reading program, and an example of a form used for recording learning activities; and "Conclusions," which presents the two main overall objectives of the reading program and specific activities for improving student reading skills. (WR)

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YOURS FOR THE ASKING

OR

An Individualized Approach to Reading Instruction

A presentation made to the

Western College Reading Association

by Jeanille Cranney

Reading Teacher

Utah Technical College at Provo

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April 5, 1974

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INTRODUCTION

The Pre Technical Learning Lab at the Utah Technical College at Provo is committed to providing individualized instruction and tutoring to meet the varied needs of the students. Modestly beginning as a one teacher operation serving three to ten students per hour a day in math, reading and English; it has metamorphosized into a multi-disciplinary, four teacher lab which served over four hundred students last quarter. It is the purpose of this paper to describe the Lab reading program and to briefly outline its offerings.

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FROM WHERE THEY ARE TO WHERE THEY AIN'T

Assessment of Student Needs

Students come to the Lab seeking help often times not knowing why or exactly what they expect to find. A first contact is a conference with a Lab instructor. During this conference planning between the student and the instructor involves setting up diagnostic testing in one or perhaps all major areas within the Lab. Each area usually has a hand in the administration of the student's assessment.

Students who request a reading assessment are usually administered a one-to-one oral reading inventory such as the revised Silvaroli Classroom Inventory Record. Further testing is usually administered using any of the following:

Cooperative English Test Form 2A
(vocabulary and comprehension)

Durrell Analysis of Reading Difficulty

Gates and MacGinite Reading Tests

Gilmore Oral Reading

Gray Oral Reading

Iowa Silent Reading Test - New Edition

SRA Silent Reading Test

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Results are shared with the student. A student may feel confident about his reading and not desire any further study in this area. Students who wish reading instruction are given details of possible programs and options which could help in gaining strengths in weak areas. Students may request auxillary help in the form of a tutor.

In order to meet student needs all Lab courses have variable credit and continuous enrollment throughout the quarter. A student may plan variable hourly attendance if desired.

A student centered interest inventory aids in helping to identify areas of a student's reading interests and habits. This inventory aids in constructing activities that an individual or group of individuals might enjoy reading about.

Placing a student involves the establishment of instructional and independent reading levels in reading and comprehension. The student will receive teacher/teaching assistant supervision during instructional reading and comprehension activities. Independent activities can be accomplished by the student without direct teacher supervision. Basic classwork schema allows for individual study, one-to-one (tutoring) learning, pairing of students, group work, and sub grouping.

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Hourly Schedule for Student Class Work

	Group I	Group II	Group III
20 Min.	work with teacher	independent work	independent work and
20 Min.	independent work and supplementary activities	work with teacher	supplementary activities
20 Min.		supplementary reading	work with teacher

Grouping takes place by use of the follwoing criteria:

Group I - Beginning reader, English as a Second Language Reader, or otherwise readers with very few skills.

Group II - Developmental reading students and students referred for help in content area reading.

Group III - Highly skilled reading student.

Methods of relating reading materials with the student provides an opportunity for further individualization of student learning activities. Working with weaknesses, new learning, and other instructional level areas are handled in a one-to-one situation and small groups. Supplementary reading is that

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reading activity chosen by the student such as a paperback novel, short story, play, or content area texts. Independent learning activities includes options in basic skill building materials which can be handled by the student with little teacher guidance.

As the above chart suggests during a class hour Group I will spend approximately forty minutes working directly in teacher contact. Some learning activities might include exercises and drills in word attack skills, group and individual reading, vocabulary, controlled reader session, discussions, comprehension activities and short term writing projects.

Group II and Group III will likewise concentrate on similar reading activities according to the students' reading level. Less direct teacher contact is provided for these groups.

Students may select to work in a content area during supplementary reading periods. Students may ask for instruction in text book chapter reading, study reading, test taking, note taking, vocabulary study and time management. In addition the reading lab has content area textbooks, alternate copies, large print texts, supplementary literature, some quizzes and tests in many areas. Upon request any required textbook reading will be taped for a student.

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Assignments and learning tasks in all groups focus around the literacy skills of reading, writing, listening, speaking and thinking. As many of these skills will be interwoven within an activity as is possible. For example, an assignment may ask the student to write a letter seeking information, to register a complaint, or promote good will. Students can share their letters with one another during a group exchange period. A follow-up activity would be to respond to their own letter in writing or exchange letters and reply to the classmate's letter with use of a telephone conversation with that classmate.

Student and master teacher conferences are a must. Daily feedback from student to teacher and/or teaching assistant via verbal comments is one means. Regular student and master teacher conferences are scheduled at the beginning and end of each quarter, as well as at the end of each learning activity.

Such learning activities can be listed on the following sample of an assignment sheet:

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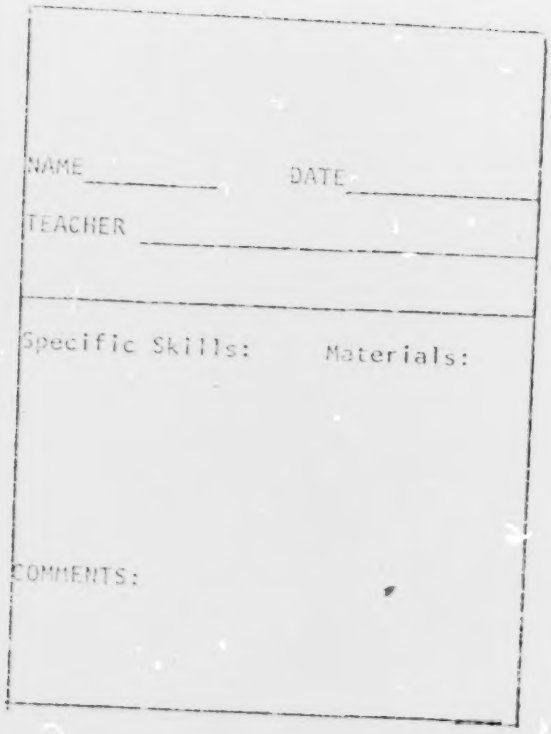

Instructional, independent and supplementary reading activities are listed beneath the left column. Materials and resources are listed in detail beneath the right column. Assignment sheets are kept in the student's folder until the activities are completed or reconstructed. At the center of the sheet is a space for student comments. This is another means in which a student can give feedback to the master teacher and/or teaching assistant about how he feels towards his reading activities.

Finished activities or reconstruction of activities require a student and master teacher conference. At this time student input helps to evaluate his work

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and feelings about the completed tasks. After an informal reading inventory has been administered to the student, the student or a small group of students, master teacher and teaching assistant plan the next objectives, goals, and learning tasks to be undertaken. Student voice is vital in this phase of setting up learning activities.

Students are asked quarterly to evaluate the reading program activities, materials, resources, involved teaching assistant and master teacher by means of a written evaluation. Space is provided for personal comments. Therefore, the entire reading program process is under continuous evaluation and revision according to student needs and interests.

Last spring quarter new growth took place in the reading program in the form of a credited speed reading course offered through the Humanities Department. This progress was due to an interest and subsequent request by trade instructors for such a course to aid their students in gaining reading proficiency skills. This course has bloomed with student interest and enrollment since that time. Planning is under way for future additions of credited companion courses in reading comprehension and vocabulary development and also in study skills.

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Although all lab credits are not transferable to other collegiate institutions, lab grades are reported on the same record sheets as credited courses.

Students aid in establishing grades for themselves. A final conference between the student and master teacher aids in establishing a reading grade and also has proven to be an excellent time for planning upcoming quarter endeavors.

CONCLUSIONS

Two main overall objectives of the Pre Technical Reading Program is to help students identify strengths and difficulties in reading and with the aid of student input develop an individualized program with maximum teacher assistance. Specific activities to "get them from where they are to where they ain't" include:

1. student and master teacher conference,
2. diagnostic testing,
3. identification of student difficulties,
4. prescription of a program with aid of student input,
5. regular student and master teacher and/or teaching assistant conferences to evaluate student successes and progress,
6. one-to-one tutoring,

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7. small group and sub group activities,
8. referral to counselors when desired by student or when planning to enter vocational programs,
9. use of software, hardware and all other available resources to assist in the individualization of programs,
10. flexibility and adaptability in program planning and scheduling,
11. desire of teachers to meet the needs of students,
12. continuous evaluation of reading programs, activities, resources and teachers by students,
13. growth of the reading program by the addition of a credited speed reading course and planning for future additions of credited companion courses in reading efficiency and vocabulary development, and study skills,

At present we are serving about 15 percent of the studentbody. We hope that with continued development of the Pre Technical Learning Lab to serve at least 50 percent of the studentbody.